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ABSTRACT

Using a specially designed, 96 item, Likert-type inventory based on Prince's Differential Values Inventory, this study explores the values of sixth, eighth, and eleventh graders to determine whether and which differences exist. Both traditional values (puritan morality, the work-success ethic, individualism, and future time orientation) and emergent values (sociability, relativistic morality, conformity, and present time orientation) were measured. In general, the data shows that, as students move up the educational ladder from grade six to grade eleven, certain values appear to change or be modified. When comparisons are made between opposite scales, students are seen to become: 1) more individualistic and less conformistic; 2) less concerned with absolutes in right and wrong; and 3) less future time oriented and more present time oriented. (TL)

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DIFFERENCES IN VALUE PATTERNS AMONG SIXTH, EIGHTH, AND ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS

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DIFFERENCES IN VALUE PATTERNS AMONG SIXTH, EIGHTH, AND ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS

David H. Quist

Within the last fifteen years considerable attention has been focused on the problem of values, especially on the issue of value change. Many believe that the values of American youth are in a state of flux. Students seem no longer content with the existing value systems; they are challenging, so the argument goes, many of our time-honored values. Spindler (1955) has classified this value flux into two main categories, Traditional and Emergent. He hypothesizes a shift in values from the more time-honored Traditional values of Work Success, Individualism, Puritan Morality, and Future Time Orientation to the more Emergent Values of Sociability, Conformity, Moral Relativism, and Present Time Orientation. Prince (1957), Thompson (1965, 1968), and Helm (1970) have employed this value framework in much of their research with high school and college students. Their results tend to conform Spindler's hypothesis that values are, in fact, changing.

While substantial work has been done at both the high school and college level, few studies have explored the values of students at the elementary, junior, and senior high school levels. Thus, while we can talk about value change at high school and college, no studies have been available which will allow us to look at the value of students in the three public school levels. Thus, we have only been able to speculate about value differences at their different levels. The present study explored the values of sixth, eighth, and eleventh graders to determine just whether or not there were, in fact, any differences in the values of students in the elementary, junior and senior high school.

Methodology

Eleven hundred sixth, eighth, and eleventh grade students in 12 schools in a Northeast city participated in this study. These students were given a specially designed, 96 item, Likert-type inventory based on Prince's Differential Values Inventory. This inventory measures the four Traditional values of Work Success, Individualism, Puritan Morality, and Future Time Orientation, and the four Emergent values of Sociability, Conformity, Moral Relativism, and Present Time Orientation. Ten value scores were obtained for each student, a Total Traditional value score and four subscale scores and a Total Emergent score and four Emergent subscale scales. Dimensions measured by these subscales are described below:

Traditional Values

Puritan Morality — Respectability, thrift, self-denial, sexual constraint, respect for elders and feelings of guilt.

Work-Success Ethic — Successful people work hard to become so. Anyone can get to the top if he tries hard enough. Success is a constant goal. There is no resting on past glories. People must work desperately and continuously to convince themselves of their worth.

Individualism — The individual is sacred and always more important than the group. In one extreme form this value sanctions egocentricity and expediency and disregard for other people's rights. In its healthier form, the value sanctions independence and originality.

Future Time Orientation — The future, not the past, or even the present, is most important. Time is valuable and cannot be wasted. Present needs must be denied for satisfaction to be gained in the future.

Emergent Values

Sociability — One should like people and get along well with them. Solitary activities are looked upon with suspicion.

Relativistic Morality — Absolutes in right and wrong are questionable. Morality is what the group thinks is right.

Conformity -- Everything is relative to the group. Group harmony is the ultimate goal. Everything one does should be done with regard for others and their feelings.

Present Time Orientation -- No one can tell what the future will hold. Therefore, one should enjoy the present -- within the limits of the well-rounded, balanced personality and group. Emphasis is on spending money and having fun.

Data

The results of value inventory were analyzed to determine what differences in value patterns, if any, were present from grades six to eleven. The analysis of variance of this data is presented in Table I. Inspection of Table I indicates the following:

a) significant differences among the three grades in seven out of the ten value scores were found to exist.

b) students in all three grades were more Traditional in their value pattern than Emergent.

c) on the Traditional scale, the mean score for the subscale, Individualism, shows a significant increase from grades six to eleven, while the mean scores for the subscales of Puritan Morality, Work Sucess, and the Total Traditional scale showed a significant decrease from grades six to eleven.

d) while the Total Emergent scores among the three grades show no significant differences, significant differences on three of the four subscales were found. For both Sociability and Conformity, the mean scores showed a progressive decrease from grades six to eleven, while the mean score on Moral Relativism showed a significant and progressive increase.

While Table I indicates that one or more of the differences among the pairs of means are significant, it does not specify which ones are significant. In order to determine which differences were significant a Duncan's Test for Multiple Comparisons was employed for each case in which the overall - F Ratio was significant. The results of these comparisons are described in Tables II & III.

TABLE I

THE MEAN VALUE SCORES OF THE PARTICIPATING STUDENTS
AT GRADES SIX, EIGHT, AND ELEVEN

Grade	N	Traditional Values									
		PM		I		WS		FTO		TOTAL	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Six	357	9.68	1.83	9.05	1.94	10.12	1.86	10.13	1.95	39.05	5.37
Eight	316	8.85	2.13	9.30	1.69	9.35	2.12	9.98	1.95	37.45	5.66
Eleven	394	7.75	2.60	9.72	1.64	9.32	2.24	9.	.12	36.56	6.21
F ratio		74.21**		14.36**		21.12**		2		18.28**	

Grade	N	Emergent Values									
		S		C		MR		PTO		TOTAL	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Six	357	10.21	1.68	4.05	2.29	3.94	1.93	7.47	1.67	25.68	4.75
Eight	316	10.20	1.81	3.48	2.26	4.96	2.43	7.48	1.84	26.12	5.41
Eleven	394	9.75	1.95	2.67	2.05	5.56	2.59	7.62	1.90	25.62	5.28
F ratio		8.19**		38.32**		47.25**		.87		1.00	

PM - Puritan Morality
I - Individualism
WS - Work Success
FTO - Future Time Orientation

S - Sociability
C - Conformity
MR - Moral Relativism
PTO- Present Time Orientation

** $p < .01$
* $p < .05$

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Inspection of Table II indicates that for the Total Traditional score the difference between any pairs of grades, six, and eight, eight and eleven, and six and eleven, is significant, with the largest difference between any successive grades occurring from the eighth to the eleventh grade.

Significant difference, $p < .01$, for all combinations of the three grades were also found on the Puritan Morality subscale. In this case the greatest difference among successive grades occurred from grades eight to eleven.

While significant differences were found between grades six and eight, and six and eleven on the Work Success subscale, no significant difference was found between grades eight and eleven.

On the Individualism scale, the pattern was reversed. In this case significant differences were found between grades eight and eleven and six and eleven, but not between grades six and eight.

In Table III the multiple comparisons for the Emergent subscales are analyzed. Inspection indicates the following:

a) significant differences between any two grades (i.e. six and eight, eight and eleven, and six and eleven) were found on the Moral Relativism Scale.

b) differences on the Sociability subscale were significant only between grades eight and eleven, and six and eleven. On this subscale the differences between grades six and eight were extremely small.

c) differences on the Conformity subscale were significant for any two pairs of grades considered. Between successive grades, the greatest difference occurred between grades eight and eleven.

Table II*

DIFFERENCES IN TRADITIONAL VALUES AT GRADES SIX, EIGHT, AND ELEVEN

Value	Grade	Mean	Difference	Level of significance
Total Traditional	Six	39.15	1.60	$p < .01$
	Eight	37.45		
Total Traditional	Eight	37.45	.89	$p < .05$
	Eleven	36.56		
Total Traditional	Six	39.15	2.49	$p < .01$
	Eleven	36.56		
Puritan Morality	Six	9.68	.85	$p < .01$
	Eight	8.83		
Puritan Morality	Eight	8.83	1.08	$p < .01$
	Eleven	7.75		
Puritan Morality	Six	9.68	1.93	$p < .01$
	Eleven	7.75		

* Duncan's Test for Multiple Comparisons

Table II (cont.)

DIFFERENCES IN TRADITIONAL VALUES AT GRADES SIX, EIGHT, AND ELEVEN

Value	Grade	Mean	Difference	Level of significance
Work Success	six	10.12	.77	$p < .01$
	eight	9.35		
Work Success	eight	9.35	.03	
	eleven	9.32		
Work Success	six	10.12	.80	$p < .01$
	eleven	9.32		
Individu-alism	six	9.05	.25	
	eight	9.30		
Individu-alism	eight	9,30	.42	$p < .01$
	eleven	9.72		
Individu-alism	six	9.05	.67	$p < .01$
	eleven	9.72		

Table III*

DIFFERENCES IN EMERGENT VALUES AT GRADES
SIX, EIGHT, AND ELEVEN

Value	Grade	Mean	Difference	Level of significance
Moral Relativism	Six	3.94	1.02	$p \ll .01$
	Eight	4.96		
MMoral Relativism	Eight	4.96	.60	$p < .01$
	Eleven	5.56		
Moral Relativism	Six	3.94	1.62	$p < .01$
	Eleven	5.56		
Conformity	Six	4.05	.57	$p \leq .05$
	Eight	3.48		
Conformity	Eight	3.48	.81	$p < .01$
	Elevon	2.67		
Conformity	Six	4.05	1.38	$p < .01$
	Eleven	2.67		
Sociability	Six	10.21	.01	
	Eight	10.20		
Sociability	Eight	10.20	.45	$p < .01$
	Eleven	9.75		
Sociability	Six	10.21	.46	$p < .01$
	Eleven	9.75		

* Duncan's Test for Multiple Comparisons

Summary

As students move up the educational ladder from grade six to eleven, certain values appear to change or be modified. Total Traditional value scores progressively decline, with the largest decline occurring between grades six and eight. Three of the four traditional subscales also show significant changes. In two cases, Puritan Morality and Individualism, the largest decline occurs between grades eight and eleven, while for the Work Success subscale, the largest decline is between grades six and eight.

While the Total Emergent scores between the three grades show no significant differences, three of the four subscales evidence significant changes from grade six to grade eleven. Unlike the Traditional subscales, there is no consistent increase or decrease. In one case, Moral Relativism, a progressive increase in mean scores occurs, with the greatest increase occurring between grades six and eight. In the two other cases, Sociability and Conformity, a progressive decrease in mean scores occurs.

Finally, when comparisons are made between opposite scales, i. e. Puritan Morality vs Moral Relativism, Individualism vs Conformity, and Present Time vs Future Time, the data indicates that students become:

a) more individualistic and less conformistic

b) less concerned with absolutes in right and wrong (Puritan Morality) and more open to a Moral Relativism point of view

c) less Future Time oriented and more Present Time oriented.

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